



US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
St. Paul District

# Information Paper

## Environmental Protection: Mississippi River, Lansing Big Lake, Lansing, Iowa



*Lansing Big Lake area in pool 9 of the Mississippi River*

### Contact

Don Powell, project manager  
(651) 290-5402 (651) 290-5258 (fax)  
[donald.l.powell@usace.army.mil](mailto:donald.l.powell@usace.army.mil)

### Location/Description

Part of the Corps' Environmental Management Program (EMP), the Lansing Big Lake backwater area is a 9,755-acre area located on the Iowa side of the Mississippi River in pool 9, approximately three miles north of Lansing, Iowa. The site lies within the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. Sediments were entering Big Lake through several side channels at the upper end of the lake. These sediments increased turbidity and were slowly filling the lake, significantly degrading the value of the excellent fish and wildlife habitat.

The project modified 10 side-channel openings into the Lansing Big Lake area. Complete closures were provided at seven of the 10 openings and rock liners were constructed at three openings.

By implementing the project, sedimentation into the Lansing Big Lake area should be reduced by 5 inches over the 50-year project life. This will slow the conversion of aquatic habitat to terrestrial habitat, preserving 150 acres of critical aquatic habitat and maintaining deeper areas throughout Big Lake. The project will also prevent further erosion and enlargement of the existing side channels.

### Status

The Rivers and Harbors Section of the Corps of Engineers completed construction of the project in October 1994. However, high water eroded the sand-fill closures. The St. Paul District remedied the problem by placing additional rockfill along the main channel shoreline where the side channels exist. It completed the work in September 1996.

### Authority

The Lansing Big Lake Habitat Project was planned under the authority of the Upper Mississippi River System - Environmental Management Program (EMP) and constructed in accordance with a Definite Project Report dated March 1991. The EMP was authorized by Section 1103 of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1986 and reauthorized by WRDA 1999.

The project was planned and designed as part of a cooperative effort among the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Iowa and Wisconsin Departments of Natural Resources, and local interests.

### Fiscal

Project design and construction costs were 100 percent federal because the project is located on national wildlife refuge lands. Operation and maintenance costs are 100 percent federal (a responsibility of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).

Federal cost	\$2,089,000
Non-federal cost	\$0
Total cost	\$2,089,000